

**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH**  
**Office of the City Manager**  
Letter to Commission No. 064-2004



**To:** Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

**Date:** March 22, 2004

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jag", written over the printed name of the City Manager.

**Subject:** **WEEKLY UPDATE**

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide the Mayor and Commission with an update describing some of the areas the administration has recently been focusing on:

**Budget Preparations** – The Office of Budget and Performance Improvement (OBPI) continues to work on budget preparations for the next fiscal year. A Commission Workshop took place on March 10 to discuss budget issues and share additional information about the process and the budgets of our three largest departments. In addition, Budget staff and I met with staff from all Departments on March 11 and 12 to continue discussing this year's budget process, preparations and allocations. OBPI Staff continues to work with all Departments on the budget preparations.

**Miami Dade County** – I attended a meeting with the County Manager and other County staff on March 10 to discuss issues relating to the County's upcoming General Obligations Bond program that voters will vote on in November. In addition, staff and I attended the County Budget and Finance meeting on March 11 to discuss allocation of resources for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend as well as issues involving the overdue \$15 million payment owed to us by the County on December 1, 2003. A resolution was reached at that meeting and approved by the Board of County Commissioners on March 16 with payment being made to the City shortly. More details regarding this item will be discussed at the April 14 City Commission meeting.

**Organizational Development** – As part of my ongoing organizational development efforts, I invited the Parking Department to join me for a brown bag lunch on March 9 and the Code Compliance Division on March 12 to talk about issues that may be important to staff from these areas. My goal is to meet with all City Departments in this informal setting to further open the lines of communication and make sure that staff at all levels have an opportunity to share information with me that may be important to them. In addition, workshops entitled the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" are being offered throughout the month of March to any interested employee. Staff will also have the opportunity to attend several Sexual Harassment workshops that are being offered during the month of April. Finally, the City's Process Improvement Team continues its efforts to review and enhance current cross-departmental budget processes to improve internal customer satisfaction.

**Quality of Life Issues** – Several meetings took place to continue addressing quality of life issues on Miami Beach. I met with the Police Chief and members of his staff on March 9 to discuss recent initiatives that the Police Department has been working on to address prostitution, crime, homelessness and vagrancy.

**Police Department** – The Police Department held a swearing-in ceremony on March 9 for the City's five new Police Officers. In addition, a Prosecutor's Training meeting was held on March 12 with Police staff and Assistant State Attorney Bart Armstrong to discuss the training of 25 misdemeanor court prosecutors relative to their role in the Department's prostitution mapping program and the impact of the crimes in our community. Information was disseminated as to the procedure in addressing first, second or more arrests/convictions. Prosecutors were instructed to place on the "record" an "objection" if the judge denied or was not willing to work with the mapping program. This information along with the court transcripts would be forwarded to Judge Slom for review. "Thumb printing" in court was also warranted to ensure a later felony conviction for third time misdemeanor convictions. An action plan was formulated to ensure that officers were aware of the program, their role in court and necessary paperwork for conviction.

**Homeless Issues** – The Office of Homeless Coordination is transitioning an average of four people per month to transitional and permanent housing. The City is achieving this in three to four months which is less than most shelters and we are also consistently placing people in shelters at a rate far greater than this time last year.

**City's Birthday** – In anticipation of the City's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 26, we have coordinated a historical exhibit of photos from the City that will be displayed in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Gallery from now through April 26, 2004. In addition, an employee-led committee is working on our annual employee picnic scheduled for Saturday, March 27 at the North Shore Open Space Park. This year's theme is an "All-America City Birthday Celebration" and will include food, games, and the celebration of the City's birthday. The event is scheduled from 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. with members of the community invited to join in the festivities when we cut a birthday cake at 4:00 p.m.

**Legislative Affairs** – Staff and I met on March 12 to discuss and coordinate our agenda for the City's delegation attending Miami-Dade Days taking place in Tallahassee from March 30-31, 2004.

**Major Events Planning (MEP)** – Staff worked throughout the past several weeks to ensure that various special events held on Miami Beach were successful including the South Beach Wine & Food Festival which took place throughout the City from March 5-7 and the Winter Music Conference and the M3 (Miami, Music, Media) summit which also took place throughout the City from March 4-7.

**Meetings and Conventions** – Several conventions took place at the Miami Beach Convention Center the week of March 15, including the Seatrade Convention with over 7,000 in attendance; the Intel-Card News Expo with over 2,000 in attendance; and several smaller conventions with a combined attendance of nearly 1,200.

**Tourism and Cultural Development** – Staff met with representatives from the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) to discuss several items, including the establishment of a link from the Tourism page of the City's website to GMCVB's site for hotel bookings in order to turn website visitors in to visitors of the destination.; further development of Camp Miami Beach, which is a partnership between various City departments, GMCVB, and HBO to package the destination to families during the summer season; a review of the \$1 million incentive fund; and our annual July 4<sup>th</sup> event.

**Parks and Recreation** – Preparations continue for our "spring break" camp which will be available from March 29 through April 2 (the week Miami Dade County public school students are on spring break) from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and will include activities, games, sports and other events. In addition, an Easter egg hunt is being planned for Saturday, April 10 at the North Shore Open Space Park and is open and free to all children and residents.

**City's Beachfront** – I met with Sidney Goldin, member of the Beach Preservation Committee, to discuss issues relating to enhancing the management, oversight, and monitoring of the City's beachfront, issues which tie into the "clean beach is a safe beach" program the Beach Preservation Committee is working on.

**Union Contracts** – A contract "signing" ceremony was held with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) on March 18 and one is scheduled with the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) on April 7. The City is continuing to collectively bargain with the Communications Workers of America (CWA), and hopes to reach agreement with them in the near future.

**Women's History Month** – In Celebration of Women's History Month the City partnered with the Commission on the Status of Women to honor and celebrate the achievements and contributions of four "Women Worth Knowing" (Ada Llerandi, Patricia Silverman, Ronnie Singer, and Marjorie York) at an event held on March 18 at the Palms Hotel.

**Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau** – I attended the GMCVB Executive Committee leadership retreat at the Biltmore Hotel from March 19-20. The agenda included discussions pertaining to several items of relevance to the City of Miami Beach, including the GMCVB Performance Review and Evaluation, the review and assessment and recommended structure of the GMCVB; and the GMCVB Visitor Industry Strategic Plan.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

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